

Fall 2008

The *School Food Services News* is published three times per year (fall, winter and spring) and is available on the School Food Services Web page.

# NEWS

## School Food Services

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**Click here to contact our staff:**

<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/staff.html>



## Geographic Preference



Effective Oct. 1, 2008, the National School Lunch Act allows Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to apply a geographic preference when procuring

unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products. While the statute permits applying a geographic preference to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate, it does not require the purchase of locally grown and locally raised agricultural products or the application of a geographic preference in the procurement of these products.

During the procurement process, each LEA has the discretion to determine whether and how a geographic preference meets its needs. LEAs may also define the area for any geographic preference (state, county, region, etc.) Geographic preference may only be applied to the procurement of unprocessed agricultural products that are locally grown and locally raised, and that have not been cooked, seasoned, frozen, canned or combined with any other products. Minimal handling and preparation is allowed such as washing vegetables, bagging greens, butchering

livestock and poultry, pasteurizing milk, and putting eggs into cartons. Additionally, using a minimal amount of preservatives on locally grown produce may be needed for the purpose of preventing spoilage and would be acceptable.

It is important to note that all milk served in Child Nutrition Programs must be pasteurized and must meet state and local standards. Pasteurized milk is the only dairy product for which geographic preference may be applied.

While a geographic preference may be used to encourage the purchase of locally grown and locally raised products by enabling an LEA to grant an advantage to local growers, this provision does not eliminate the requirement for procurements to be conducted in a manner that allows for free and open competition consistent with the purchasing institution's obligation to be responsible stewards of federal funds.



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**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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## 2007-2008 Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) Results

During the 2007-2008 school year, the School Food Services section conducted 155 CRE reviews. Fourteen of the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) did not meet Performance Standard 1, which evaluates student eligibility determinations and meal-counting and claiming procedures for accuracy. One LEA did not meet Performance Standard 2, which evaluates meals on the day of review for meal-component completeness. Please take extra care when determining student eligibility, meal counting and claiming, and monitoring meals for required components to ensure that the LEA is providing the State Agency (SA) with an accurate count of reimbursable free, reduced price and paid meals served.

The 2007-2008 school year was the fifth of the five-year CRE cycle. All participating LEAs in Missouri were reviewed within this cycle. School Food Services staff conducted 762 CRE reviews. Sixty-three LEAs did not meet Performance Standard 1, and four LEAs did not meet Performance Standard 2. Nineteen LEAs were selected for a second review, and three LEAs were selected for a third review. School Food Services staff also conducted 90 Technical Assistance visits.

## Congratulations to Nixa R-II

During spring 2008, Cindy Kubowicz and her staff at Nixa R-II received the School Nutrition Association's District of Excellence Distinction in School Nutrition. The District of Excellence Distinction recognizes school districts receiving self-assessment scores of 80 percent or higher in all four main areas of the Keys to Excellence Program. For more information, visit <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/keys>. Congratulations to everyone involved for a job well done!

## National School Lunch Week Proclamation



National School Lunch Week 2008 was Oct. 13-17. The proclamation signing with Gov. Matt Blunt was held Oct. 8. In attendance from left to right: Karen Wooton, director, School Food Services; Braden Hickey, student; Darla Hickey, administrative assistant, School Food Services; Gov. Matt Blunt; Dana Doerhoff, assistant director, School Food Services; Rachel Sims, student; Dawson Sims, student; Grennan Sims, nutrition education coordinator, Hickman Mills C-1 School District; and Marie Heistand, president, Missouri School Nutrition Association, and secretary, food and nutrition services, Hickman Mills C-1 School District.

## Permanent Application Agreement Reminder

The permanent application agreement for the Child Nutrition Programs must remain on file with the LEA. You are asked to complete a renewal application agreement on the School Food Services Web site for the current school year.

## Aerated Beverages Categorized as Soda Water by the Competitive Food Services Regulation

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has recently determined that all beverages labeled as aerated, or that bubble and fizz for several minutes after opening, are to be categorized as soda water as defined by the Competitive Food Services regulation. FNS considers aerated beverages to be foods of minimal nutritional value; as such, they may not be served in the food service area during the meal periods of both the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs.

## Verification of Approved Applications for Free and Reduced Price Meal Benefits

Verification is confirmation of eligibility for free and reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program. Verification must include either confirmation of income eligibility or confirmation that the child is included in a certified Food Stamp household or Temporary Assistance unit. When a household responds that it no longer wishes to receive benefits (rather than submitting the income documentation), it is considered a non-response. Please refer to the Verification Guidance at [http://dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/PDF/VERTIFICATION\\_GUIDANCE.pdf](http://dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/PDF/VERTIFICATION_GUIDANCE.pdf). This document contains helpful information and sample letters to assist in conducting an accurate verification.

As a reminder, LEAs must verify at least as many applications as calculated by the sample formula, but LEAs may do no more. While the verification sample cannot exceed statutory limits, LEAs still have an obligation to verify questionable applications for cause. This may include, but is not limited to, situations where school officials have knowledge of household circumstances that would cause officials to verify the information on the application. Verifying applications for cause is outside of the verification sample.

Verification must be completed by Nov. 15, and LEAs must complete and submit the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Verification Summary Report to the SA by Dec. 15.

If you have questions regarding verification, please contact the SA at (573) 751-3526 or refer to the Verification Guidance.



### National Food Service Management Institute

Every year the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) presents satellite seminars in April and October and live interactive teleconferences in January and August. Check the link on our home page under Additional Sites of Interest. The NFSMI Web address is <http://www.nfsmi.org>. Click on Educational Opportunities for satellite seminar information.

### Resource Materials

Check out the newest resource information at <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food>:

- Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines
- Coordinated School Health Conference
- Commodity Expo Registration Form

## Coordinated School Health Conference

The Coordinated School Health Conference will be held on Dec. 4-6, 2008, at the Lodge of Four Seasons Resort, Lake Ozark, Mo.

To register, go to [www.healthykidsmo.org](http://www.healthykidsmo.org) or [www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food](http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food).

## Free and Reduced Price Meals Family Applications

When approving free and reduced price meal applications, please remember the following:

- Any application that is missing required information, that contains inconsistent information or that is unclear is considered an incomplete application and cannot be processed. The LEA should make reasonable efforts to contact the household in order to obtain or clarify required information. LEAs cannot obtain the information from other school records.

- When applications are approved based on participation in the Food Stamp or Temporary Assistance programs, each child must have a Food Stamp or Temporary Assistance number on the application to be approved for free meal benefits.

More information may be found in the USDA Eligibility Guidance for School Meals at <http://dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/Handbooks.htm> or on the FNS Web site at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/EligibilityManual.pdf>.



## New Fluid Milk Substitution Rule

New federal regulations have changed guidance for milk substitutions for students who do not have a disability.

The new regulations DO NOT change guidance for:

- substitutions for students with disabilities.
- substitutions other than milk for students who do not have a disability but are unable to consume a food item because of medical or other special dietary needs.

The new regulations DO change guidance for:

- milk substitutions for students with medical or other special dietary needs that do not rise to the level of a disability.

The following is a brief overview of both the existing and the new guidance:

**Student With a Disability** is any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. LEAs must make substitutions in meals for a student with a disability that restricts his or her diet. Substitutions must be made on a case-by-case basis and only when supported by a written statement signed by a licensed physician that explains the need for substitutions and includes recommended alternate foods.

**Student Without a Disability** is any person not considered disabled but who is unable to consume a food item because of medical or other special dietary needs. Substitutions may be made on a case-by-case basis when supported by a statement signed by a recognized medical authority.



- Substitutions for Foods Other than Milk: **No Change** – LEAs may choose to provide substitutions on a case-by-case basis and only when supported by a written statement signed by a recognized medical authority that explains the need for substitutions and includes recommended alternate foods.
- Substitutions for Milk: **NEW REGULATIONS** – The only milk substitutions allowed under the new rule for students without disabilities are nondairy beverages that are nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and that provide specific levels of nutrients as listed in the following table:

NUTRIENT	PER CUP
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	500 IU
Vitamin D	100 IU
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	0.44 mg
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg

A student with a food allergy or intolerance is generally not considered a student with a disability, and LEAs are not required to make substitutions. However, when in the physician's assessment a food allergy may result in a severe, life-threatening reaction (anaphylactic reaction), the student then meets the definition of a student with a disability.

**New Fluid Milk Substitution Rule** *(continued)*

- The new rule recognizes the valuable contributions of milk to a student's diet. Therefore, it does not allow an LEA to offer other beverages (such as juice) as a milk substitute. However, this rule has no effect on offering lactose-free milk to a student with a medical or special dietary need such as lactose intolerance. Lactose-free milk continues to be allowed as part of a reimbursable meal.
- Schools that elect to offer milk substitutions for students without a disability can now accept a statement from a parent/legal guardian or from a medical authority identifying the student's need. Prior to this rule, schools were only able to accept a statement signed by a recognized medical authority.
- LEAs have the discretion to select acceptable substitutions that meet the established nutritional standards.
- LEAs are required to inform the State Agency when a school chooses to offer fluid milk substitutions other than for students with a disability.
- The approval for fluid milk substitutions must remain in effect until the medical authority or the student's parent/legal guardian revokes the request in writing, or until the LEA changes its substitution policy for students without a disability.
- Expenses to provide substitutions for fluid milk that exceed program reimbursements must be paid by the LEA.

**IMPORTANT!** In recognition of the fact that no products are currently formulated to meet the rule's requirements, schools may continue to provide accommodations that they have already agreed to under the prior program regulations for students without a disability who have medical or special dietary needs. However, any new accommodations must comply with the new regulations. USDA will reconsider this policy in approximately six months and will issue further guidance then. USDA anticipates that allowable products will be available soon.

## School Food Services Staff Changes

The School Food Services section has had recent changes in staff and regions.

Mary AuBuchon retired on August 31 and is now working part-time in our office. Mickey Belosi is retiring on November 30. Congratulations to Mary and Mickey on their retirements.

We would like to welcome the following new staff to our section. Katie Long has been the supervisor for the Northeast region since June. Kelley Taylor joined the section in November as the supervisor for

the East region, and Rachel Hedberg becomes the supervisor for the Southeast region in December.

New regions have been set in the state, and your LEA may have a new supervisor. View the region map at <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/staff.html> to see if the counties in your region have changed.

Dorothy Pace will continue to supervise the Northwest region, and Sandra Lang will remain the supervisor for the Southwest region. Lisa Crust will supervise the new North Central region.



*Happy Holidays  
from the School Food  
Services Section*

## School Food Services Calendar

### July 2008

- 1 • Regular Term Application/Agreement available on Web site
- Revenues and Expenditures Report available on Web site (non-public schools)
- 15 • June claim due on Web site (separate form due for summer school meals claimed in June)
- Value of Donated Food Report available online
- Commodity Open Order deadline at noon (Aug. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Sept. delivery)
- Direct Certification download available on Web Application System
- Perform and document monthly edit checks (year-round and summer school programs)

### August 2008

- 15 • July Claim Form due on Web site
- Commodity Open Order deadline at noon (Sept. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Oct. delivery)
- Annual Secretary of the Board Report deadline (public schools only)
- Perform and document monthly edit check on daily meal counts

### September 2008

- 1 • Update Methods of Collection and Meal Counting Form (if methods/procedures have changed from previous year)
- 15 • August claim due on Web site
- Compliance with Food Safety Inspection Report due
- Revenue and Expenditure Report available on Web site (public schools)
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (Oct. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Nov. delivery)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### October 2008

- 1 • Count approved free and reduced price applications for verification; begin verification process
- 13-17 • National School Lunch Week
- 15 • Regular term application/agreement renewal deadline
- September claim due on Web site
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (Nov. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Dec. delivery)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### November 2008

Check Web site for Commodity Expo dates

- 1 • Revenue and Expenditures Report due
- 15 • October claim due on Web site
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (Dec. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Jan. delivery)
- Verification process must be completed
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### December 2008

Commodity processing packets will be mailed in December

- 15 • November claim due on Web site
- Verification Summary Report due to State Agency
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (Jan. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (Feb. delivery)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks
- 31 • Conduct commodity inventory (food management schools)

### January 2009

Commodity Inventory Report due (food management schools)

- 15 • December claim due on Web site
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (Feb. delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (March delivery)
- On-site reviews must be completed prior to Feb. 1
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### February 2009

Return commodity processing packets to School Food Services in February

- 15 • January claim due on Web site
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (March delivery)
- Processed product order deadline at noon (April delivery; last delivery of the school year in April)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### March 2009

Summer workshop information will be on the Web site in March

- 15 • February claim due on Web site
- Commodity open order deadline at noon (April delivery; last delivery of the school year in April)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### April 2009

- 15 • March claim due on Web site
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### May 2009

- 1 • Summer term application agreement available on Web site
- Free and reduced price application and Direct Certification (2009-2010 school year) booklet available on Web site (download direct certification data on July 15)
- 15 • April claim due on Web site
- Perform and document monthly edit checks

### June 2009

- 15 • May claim due on Web site (Separate claim required for summer school meals claimed in May)
- Perform and document monthly edit checks